

POULTRY DEPARTMENT.

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Fighting Lice and Suppressing Broodiness.

Almost every experienced poultry-keeper has a different method of combating the insect enemies of his chickens. Here is another, from the Ohio Poultry Journal:

I have been very busy getting things in shape at my yard and fighting lice, which is a sort of recreation for most poultrymen. But with several hundred birds to keep laying, one must fight the lice if the egg basket is to be kept full. This means work, and with me it has been quite a problem. I have been experimenting in this line, and have hit upon a plan that does the work, and does it well. What I mean is that doing it once will last for some time. It does not have to be done all over the following week.

Formerly I used lice powder on the chickens, fumigated the house and painted the perches, but this was not thoroughly effective, because it did not get every louse or kill the eggs.

My plan now has been to take one pound of naphthaline flake and dissolve it in about one and a half gallons of coal oil, letting it stand for a day or two, then fill a small Spinwall sprayer with the mixture and go for the lice. Have an assistant to use the pump. Put an apron over your lap. Then start in, running your fingers through the fowl's feathers, just as you would in dusting with powder, but have your attendant force a fine spray through the feathers. After a little practice this can be done very rapidly, but care should be taken not to get on too much of the solution, as it will blister, but a fine spray will do no harm to the bird or feathers, and will effectually rid the bird of every louse, every nit or egg that is on it. Care should be taken to spray the head, neck and every section of the bird. The fumes of this solution will kill the vermin, but direct contact is a sure thing. The odor will last for several days, and the conditions are such that no louse can live, even after several days from the time of treatment.

If the pens are cleaned and new litter or straw put in, even white birds will look no worse for the operation, provided they are kept in a clean place for a day or two. When this is done properly and the pens are cleaned and given the same treatment, which requires but a few minutes, one application will last for months, providing your chickens do not mingle with others that are lousy, as one lousy chicken will soon inoculate an entire flock.

The question of how to keep down the lice has been quite a problem, and has been the direct cause of many failures in the poultry line. The lice pest is not so bad with a few, but with a large number it constantly becomes worse, and soon overruns the place and eats up the profit. Few poultrymen would stand up and let some one take money out of their pockets without looking for an opportunity to fight back, but practically this is the same condition when they allow their stock to become infested with vermin, as all the nutriment of the feed is used up in order to supply sustenance for the lice, and then eggs and meat soon become scarce articles. I hope this will be a benefit to some of the readers of the Ohio Poultry Journal, as it has proven a success with me.

I also want to say a few words in regard to breaking up broody hens, as this is the time of the year when a poultryman's patience taxed to its full capacity if he does not want to violate the laws of the good book. There are several ways of trying to put biddy out of the notion of raising a large family when no more is welcome. I say trying, as so few of them meet with much success—that is, to induce her to change her mind and

soon return to her former job of producing eggs. A system that will be found the most practical is to have a slatted coop set up on four legs in some cool, shady place, with plenty of air on the sides and a slat bottom, the slats to be one and one-half to two inches wide and about two inches apart. Place the hen in this. It will be impossible for her to generate much heat sitting over these slats. Give her plenty of cool, fresh water, and feed but once a day, and let that feed be a light one of grain. Use very little corn, as that will keep up the fever. Vegetables or green food can be used to advantage, and where a hen is exceedingly fat no grain at all should be fed for the first three days. In many cases three days are sufficient to break up broodiness, but in persistent cases a few days longer will be found necessary. A hen that has been fed light, with but little grain, will come back to laying and will lay much better than one that has been fed liberally with grain. Broodiness can be induced by liberal feeding of fat-forming foods. The writer has been able to keep Light Brahmas from getting broody, and worked just the opposite effect on a pen of pure-bred Buff Leghorns, simply by controlling them through their food.

Green Cut Bone vs. Beef Scrap.

The following question and answer from the Reliable Poultry Journal, explain themselves:

Q.—Why have you ceased to recommend green cut bone as much as formerly, or why do you advise the use of beef scraps so much more than formerly? Has the green cut bone not been used successfully, or is it inferior to beef scrap? A. F. W.

A.—The chief reason is that it is more convenient to feed beef scrap. It is not always possible to get a supply of green bone that is all right and cutting the bone is certainly hard labor even with improved machinery. Green cut bone is an excellent food and gives good results. The beef scrap is simply a more convenient and labor saving form of animal food. Green cut bone to give satisfactory results must be fed immediately after cutting, except in very cold weather, since it heats and spoils very quickly. There is also the same objection to it that there is to feeding any raw meat food. We like to feed green cut bone to our fowls and do so whenever we can obtain a supply conveniently that we know is of good quality.

Falsehoods in Figures.

To the old saying that: "Figures will not lie," some one answered, no, but how lies can figure." Wonderful statements of the enormous extent and value of the poultry business have been published from time to time in various papers. The New England Farmer takes up one of these and dissects and answers it.

The last census of poultry of the United States showed that the total number of chickens was 233,598,863; turkeys, 6,599,367; geese, 5,676,863; and ducks, 4,807,358. About 88 and one-eighth per cent of the farms of this country had poultry as an asset. At least 250,000,000 chickens, to say nothing of other kinds of poultry, are consumed each year. The government authorities estimate the egg and poultry income in the United States last year at \$280,000,000. The total value of gold, silver, wool and sheep products foots up \$272,400,000. The wheat crop was worth \$229,000,000; and the American hog at home and abroad yielded \$186,500,000. Cotton, the simple staple nearest approaching the hen, was worth \$259,161,000.—New York Produce Review.

The above astounding figures have inspired many an eulogistic editorial on the queenly hen. The dailies, local and agricultural weeklies and monthlies have copied them verbatim in laudatory articles on the magnitude of the poultry industry, and we look for the magazine "experts" to weave

them into delightful stories of poultry Klondikes.

It is quite likely that not one of the writers will ever stop to question the veracity of these so-called government statistics.

That "figures can't lie" is an old saying not always true, for they may be a faithful source of misrepresentation.

The figures in this hen article show last year's wheat crop to have been worth \$229,000,000, while the yearbook of the department of agriculture, page 640, states that the wheat crop of 1904 amounted to 552,399,517 bushels, valued at \$510,489,874.

The report of the census bureau just issued shows the total crop of cotton grown in the United States last year, as fixed by the ginner, which is the only reliable report, to be 13,693,279 bales. As there are 500 pounds of cotton to the bale and the would-be government statistician values the crop at \$259,161,000, it makes the value of last year's cotton less than four cents a pound, a figure too absurdly incorrect to have space in a reputable paper.

We do not refer to this matter for the purpose of discrediting the American hen; she is the grandest bird in the universe, and there ought to be more of her in New England. We desire merely to show how easy it is for editors and writers to be misled by untruthful statistics purporting to come from the government. There are doubtless other so-called "statistics" floating the rounds of the press, quoted and used in comparison by public speakers and writers, which have no more basis in fact than these hen statistics.

Guinea Fowls for Watch Dogs.

We have at various times printed articles recommending the raising of guinea fowls. Here are some more, the first is from the Poultry Gazette:

White guineas do the work of a watch dog, and they have satisfied me in this respect and proving a money-making investment besides. They are the first thing on the place to notice a crow, hawk, strange dog or human visitor, day or night. They even sound their warning if one of our family comes in after dark. Some people object to them because of their noise, but the only time they bother me is when visitors are in the yard wanting to talk chicken or turkey, and the guineas "put in" all the time like ill-natured children.

Guineas are very healthy, eat anything, but rustle for the greater part of their food, wandering some distance over the farm in search of insects. But no one can object to this as they always come home and they are a benefit to the land over which they roam. They are one of the greatest helps in the garden, and never destroy a plant, but they might if starved to it. Fences were not made for guineas as they just sail over whenever they feel like it. This troubles some, but they are easily taught and are afraid of the "big stick" too.

They begin laying about the first of April and keep it up until they are allowed to sit, but if not allowed they will lay till late in the fall. Mine lay in the hen houses and with the turkey hens until these get broody, then Mrs. Guinea hides her nest for sure. But they have never gone very far, and they have a peculiar "cackle" and when I hear it I go as near as I can, sit down, and usually when it sounds again I can go right to the nest. Mine are very tame and don't leave the nest if they see me go to it. I take the eggs out with my hands but am careful not to touch the chicken eggs I put in any more than necessary. Some hens are more particular than others about their nests.

When they become broody, drive from the nest, take out the nest eggs and destroy the nest with your foot and in two or three days you will be called upon to follow that "cackle" again. A hen lays 20 to 25 eggs before wanting to sit.

Most people suppose it takes four weeks for the eggs to hatch, but us-



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ually it will be done from two to four days less, depending upon their freshness and whether they are under a warm hen or not. They all pop out at once like prairie chickens; and what pretty little fellows they are! Sleek as grease. Watch for lice, although lice do not seem to be overly fond of guinea flavor. Leave the little ones in the nest 24 hours, then take them off during an afternoon, as it is warmer then. Dip each little bill in a saucer of water. Fill a cup with water and invert it in a saucer for them to drink out of. Feed very lightly some prepared chick food that is very fine. Care should be taken not to overfeed as their appetites are always greater than their capacities.

Chicken hens make the best mothers for me. Leave the hen cooped while the guineas have their liberty at first. They will get lost, yes sir. Then they will stand erect like pelicans and every little buzz-saw voice will begin working and you will trail out and likely they will set out straightway for their mother. In a very few days, though they will wander some distance, return, warm up, and out they go again. After the dew is off the grass in the morning let the hen go with them and they will lead her a merry chase. A clover or alfalfa field is a fine hunting ground for them after they know their mother.

I know of no bird that loves its mother as a guinea does. It is never entirely weaned from her, and I have had them drive her from next year's brood and try to persuade her to go with them.

The following is also quite interesting and there are some hints that may be valuable if you wish to try keeping guineas.

The Guinea Fowl.

In the wild state guinea fowls show a preference for forests and wooded valleys, and congregate in large flocks. Under less favorable conditions the flocks are much smaller and the birds range over large areas. In their natural habitat the food varies with the season. Thus in the spring they feed upon insects, and later, in summer, also upon leaves and shoots, buds, berries and seeds of all sorts. In winter they seek cultivated fields, and the foods which they afford.

As has already been indicated, the domesticated birds have retained a surprising number of their wild traits. If allowed to have liberty, they wander over long distances, fly almost as well as if they had never known captivity, and prefer roosting high in trees to spending the night under cover. They make their nests, which are hardly more than a few twigs, put over a hollow in the ground, in some secluded spot at a distance from habitations. They will desert a nest if they see a human being near it; and if it or the eggs in it are touched by the hands in their absence, they are said to leave it at once. For this reason a stick or a long-handled spoon, it is quite commonly believed, must be used in removing the eggs. Some who are familiar with guinea fowl insist that care must also be taken to leave several nest eggs, as the hens will not usually lay again in a nest containing only one or two; one breeder considers five the smallest number which it is safe to leave.

When secluded nests are provided, however, guinea hens will generally lay in the poultry houses, and if they have high perches and are fed regularly at night, will also roost at home.

In their wild state guinea fowl mate in pairs, and many, particularly earlier, writers on the subject recommend mating them thus in captivity. However, it is now customary to allow several hens to a cock. A prominent American breeder recommends three